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consumers at this level are solely seeking to satisfy their basic survival needs, such as water and staple food items (Walker, 2017). In 1986, Roberto C. Goizueta, the Chairman and CEO of Coke at the time, is quoted saying: “Eventually the number 1 beverage on earth will not be tea, or coffee, or wine, or beer, it will be soft drinks. Our soft drinks.” (Angelico, Neidlik, & Webb, 1998) proving that the company was determined to target the consumers in this motivation tier. Since then, Coca Cola has managed to convince consumers that it should be a staple in their diet, and for many, it has completely replaced water, but this was not always the case (Angelico et al., 1998). In 1886, John Pemberton combined the healing properties of the coca leaf and the cola nut to create a drink that would eventually become Coca Cola; he originally created and marketed it as a “brain- tonic” or “cure- all elixir” (Angelico et al., 1998). Though Maslow would not be born for another 20 or so years (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2019), Pemberton was inadvertently marketing his elixir to the second tier in Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs: safety needs, which includes health, security, and protection. According to Maslow, consumers will not be motivated by safety needs until their physiological needs have been met (Walker, 2017). While Coke is no longer regarded as a “health” drink, it still appeals to consumers motivated by safety needs because it provides them with the comforting feel of home. During WW2, one severely wounded American soldier even credited holding in his hand an empty Coke bottle for being “the only thing that kept him from dying all night long” (Angelico et al., 1998). The motivational needs in the third tier, belonging and love, address consumers who feel their physiological and safety needs have been adequately satisfied who are now looking to spend more of their disposable income (Walker, 2017). This tier is an appealing choice for marketers (Walker, 2017), Coke included, due to the sheer volume of consumers motivated to make purchasing decisions that satisfy their social needs. Coke’s global growth strategy resulting in the brand becoming “within an arm’s reach” of the consumer at all times, combined with its air of nostalgia sentimentally depicted in advertisements featuring children and the good ol’ days, resulted in many consumers purchasing Coke as a way to fulfill their intimacy motivations (Angelico et al., 1998). “Coca Cola is your friend. Wherever you go Coca Cola is always there, it’s like coming home to mother.” (Angelico et al., 1998). The second to final tier, self- esteem needs, generally consists of luxury brands (Walker, 2017). In modern- day Eurocentric and Western cultures, we might not consider Coke a luxury item, but its early history is rooted in social status and classism. Mid- 20th century, as a feature of American culture and domestic hospitality, a host would be expected to serve friends and family Coke over Pepsi, the former regarded as a luxury and the latter regarded as a, “second- class drink” (Angelico et al., 1998). This social tier also encompasses motivations surrounding achievement, a theme present throughout Coke’s marketing since the early days when a company hanging a Coke sign out resulted in “immediate business success” (Angelico et al., 1998). Achievement and success were also strong themes developed through the brand’s sponsorship marketing strategies, namely as a feature sponsor for Olympic events including the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta (Angelico et al., 1998) , which continue to this day. Self- actualization needs, the final tier, addresses the motivations of consumers who have already fulfilled their needs in all of the previous tiers and now desire a sense of self- fulfillment and accomplishment (Walker, 2017). Asa Candler, who transformed Coke into the soda giant we know today, appealed to consumers—name business men at the time – in this tier by claiming “a Coca Cola taken at 8, energizes the brain ‘till 11” (Angelico et al., 1998). Candler also oversaw the creation of Coke’s iconic Normal Rockwell- style of advertisements which would catalyze 2 decades of “ads linking Coke to life’s special moments” (Angelico et al., 1998). I believe Coke is the perfect brand to study when learning about Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. Being able to market to the different motivations of consumers at each level of the model cannot be easy, but I believe it is the reason Coca Cola has maintained so much success over such a long period of time. Maslow’s model teaches us that, “[c]onsumers may have different need priorities at different times and stages of their lives” (Solomon et. al, 2015, p. 101), thus by marketing to all 5 tiers, Coca Cola can essentially guarantee life- long consumers. In the grand scheme of marketing, understanding the “why” behind a consumer’s decision plays a crucial role. What exactly triggers the purchase? Why do consumers prefer certain products over others? These are vital questions that underline one central concept: consumer motivation. Defining Motivation in Consumer BehaviorTo put it in the simplest possible terms, motivation in consumer behavior is what drives a customer to seek, select, and purchase a particular product or service. It’s the spark, that kick- starting energy that nudges them toward a decision. Needless to say, this motivation varies from person to person and there’s an array of factors that influence this. Factors that Influence Consumer MotivationTouching on the factors that influence consumer motivation is essential to comprehending the concept. Here are some key influencing aspects: Needs and Wants: Basically, the urgency and desire for a product or service trigger the motivation to purchase. This ranges from basic survival needs to more complex desires. Preferences: A consumer’s subjective likes and dislikes come into play, often influenced by personal experiences or information gathered over time. Social Influence: Consumers are also motivated by societal norms, peer pressure, and trends that permeate through social circles. The Why’s of MotivationUnderstanding what drives a consumer’s decision is great, but how about understanding “why”? Here’s where consumer psychology steps in. Unraveling the ‘why’ behind a purchase decision can be related back to two basic types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic Motivation: Here, the motivation comes from within, driven by personal interests or sheer enjoyment. For instance, a person might be keen on purchasing a painting because they genuinely appreciate art. Extrinsic Motivation: This type of motivation is driven by external factors or rewards. This could be anything from discounts, loyalty programs, or even recognition from peers. Practical Examples in ActionLet’s use a quick scenario to highlight this. Think about a teenager who buys the latest smartphone. They might be intrinsically motivated if they have a genuine interest in tech, love exploring new features, and derive a sense of satisfaction from owning the latest gadget. Alternatively, the extrinsic motivation could be showing off to their peers or even the simple joy of unboxing a new product. Here, the motivation to purchase is still very much present, but it’s driven by an external factor. Photo by merrily on UnsplashTypes of Consumer MotivationIf you’ve looked at what motivates consumers, it’s high time we delve deeper to understand the distinct forms of consumer motivation, as follows: The Power of Perceived ValueIt all boils down to this idea: consumers will only engage with your product or service if they perceive its value to outweigh the cost. This perceived value is essentially the fuel that drives their buying decision. Let’s break down a tangible example. If a student is motivated to purchase a chemistry book, their decision will hinge on their perception of its value. Will it enrich their understanding, offer them the best information, and help them excel in their exams? If the answer is a resounding yes, then they will feel motivated to make a purchase. Desire: The Magnetic ForceDesire plays a significant role in influencing consumer motivation. It’s what draws them towards certain products and services. After all, we’re all swayed by things that solve our problems or meet some implicit or explicit desire. Diving into a textbook example, let’s revisit our student looking to buy a chemistry book. If they have a burning desire to ace the chemistry exam or a fascination with the subject, their desire will pull them towards finding the very best learning materials. The result? A driven, motivated potential customer. The Role of Rational MotivationRational motivation comes into play when consumers make calculated decisions based on an assessment of pros and cons. They examine the practical benefits, quality and price of a product or service before making a purchase. Take a consumer in search of a car. They will look at factors such as fuel efficiency, safety ratings, spare part availability, and resale value. When these rational considerations are met satisfactorily, motivation to buy is kindled. Emotional Motivation: The Silent InfluencerDon’t underestimate the power of emotions in shaping consumer motivation. Emotional motivation based on feelings, moods, or sentimental associations, can strongly influence purchasing decisions. Consider a faithful fan of Harley Davidson motorcycles driven by an emotional connection to the brand. The rumble of the engine, the branding, the sense of brotherhood among riders, all tug at their heartstrings and motivate them to continue patronizing the brand. Fear also functions as a form of consumer motivation. Consumers often buy products or subscribe to services to alleviate or prevent fears, out of the desire for safety or security. Think of the surge in sales of face masks and hand sanitizers during the COVID- 19 pandemic. Fear of contracting the deadly virus greatly motivated consumers to purchase these products. Photo by vonshnauzer on UnsplashThe Role of Perception in Consumer MotivationWe’ve already seen what motivation is in consumer behavior and what factors influence it, such as needs, wants, preferences, and social influence. Now, let’s delve a bit deeper and uncover how consumer perception molds motivation and ultimately, influences purchasing decisions. PerceptionPerception in marketing refers to how consumers interpret information about products or services. This can relate to pricing, branding, packaging, advertising, and so on. Each person’s perception varies and is influenced by a multitude of factors including past experiences, personal beliefs, and societal culture. Perception Influencing MotivationNow that we understand what perception is, let’s see how it influences consumer motivation. Perceived value: When a consumer perceives a product or service to have high value, they are more likely to be motivated to purchase it. Take Apple products as an example; many consumers perceive them as high quality, innovative, and status- enhancing, fueling their motivation to buy. Desire: A consumer’s perception of a product can build a strong desire, making it a powerful motivator. A classic instance is diamond marketing. De Beers effectively used marketing strategies to create the perception that diamonds equate love and commitment, stirring a strong emotional desire among consumers to buy diamonds. Rational motivation: When a consumer perceives a product to reasonably fulfill a specific need or function, they are motivated rationally. For example, if an individual perceives an electric car like Tesla to be environment- friendly and cost- effective in the long run, their motivation to buy is rational. Emotional motivation: Sometimes, consumers are not driven by logic but by how a product makes them feel. This is where emotional motivation comes into play. A consumer might be motivated to buy a luxury handbag not for its functionality but for the feel- good factor it provides. Fear motivation: While it may seem dubious, fear can indeed be a motivating factor. This is often seen in the health and insurance sectors, where consumers are motivated to buy insurance policies or health- related products due to fear of illness or uncertainty. Utilizing Perception for MarketingArmed with the knowledge of how consumer perception influences motivation, marketers can harness it to boost product demand and sales. Elevate Perceived Value: By emphasizing product quality, uniqueness, and benefits, marketers can hike up the perceived value, hence motivation. Inspire Desire: Romanticizing a product and connecting it emotionally with the consumer can lead to stronger motivation to buy. Trigger Rational Motivation: Providing clear, comprehensive information about the product can trigger rational motivation. Evoke Emotion: Emotional branding can lead to higher consumer motivation, and thus higher product demand. Ignite Fear: Though it must be used ethically, creating a sense of urgency or caution can motivate consumers to act. Photo by marklb on UnsplashMotivation and Buying BehaviorFollowing from our previous discussion on how motivation influences consumer behavior, it’s clear that motivation plays a pivotal role in essentially every buying decision. Let’s dive deeper into some other fundamental factors that are stirred by motivation, pushing consumers to make purchase decisions. Perceived Value’s Impact on MotivationA consumer’s motivation to buy a product is hugely influenced by their perception of its value. This perceived value is the consumer’s assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given. For example, when students perceive a textbook as high- quality, valuable and instrumental to their studies, they are more likely to buy it. How Desire Motivates ConsumersDesire goes hand in hand with customer motivation. It’s the strong wish for something one sees as valuable or satisfying. Consider the desire for the latest Nike sneakers—fans often justify the high price with the expectation of quality, trend- supporting aesthetics, and brand prestige. For marketers, understanding and tapping into these desires offers an effective pathway for motivating purchases. Rational Motivation and Its Influence by PerceptionIt’s crucial we also discuss rational motivation. Consumers are considered to be rational when they seek out the best products that are worth their money and time. Suppose a customer is after a durable, reliable car. In that case, they might conduct extensive research, scrutinizing various car brands, reviews, and ratings—an effort to make a rational buying decision influenced by their perception of the brands at hand. Role of Emotional Motivation in Buying DecisionsEmotions play a significant role in shaping consumer motivation. Positive emotions—like happiness or excitement—about a product can boost motivation to make a purchase. Think about the joy children show when they see toys from their favorite TV show; they want those toys because they make them happy. Fear as a Driving ForceFear can also act as a motivating factor. Many insurance companies use the fear of unforeseen circumstances like accidents, health issues, or robberies to motivate customers to buy their policies. While this may seem somewhat negative, it’s another layer of understanding how motivation works on consumer behavior. Utilizing Perception in Marketing StrategiesUnderstanding how these factors impact consumer motivation, marketers can tailor their strategies to trigger motivation. They can: Elevate perceived value by highlighting the unique benefits and qualities of their products. Inspire desire by showcasing how the product meets consumers’ wants and needs. Encourage rational motivation through clear and concise product information. Evoke emotions by tapping into the positive feelings associated with their product. Ignite fear, especially for products and services that prevent or resolve adverse situations. The understanding of motivation in relation to consumer behavior presents infinite opportunities for marketers to connect with consumers on a deeper level, better serve their needs, and consequently increase sales. Hence, the power of consumer perception in influencing motivation and purchasing decisions should never be overlooked in the world of marketing. After all, it’s said, “People don’t buy products; they buy feelings and solutions”. And what other way to drive these feelings and solutions than through the careful crafting of strategies to motivate the consumer? The key is understanding the core of consumer behavior and fine- tuning our approach to meet these needs, wants, and preferences in the most fulfilling way. Strategies to Motivate ConsumersAn excellent strategy businesses utilize is enhancing consumer perception of the value their product or service offers. It’s not always about the price tag; consumers will be more motivated to make a purchase when they believe the value they’re getting is more than what they’re parting with. Why do they feel that a \$200 sneaker would last longer and serve them better than a \$50 one? Remember, perceived value can also be improved by the brand image and reputation, quality symbolism, and unique features that set the product apart from competitors. How Desire Motivates ConsumersDesire forms an essential aspect of consumer motivation. Marketers tap into this by creating an aspiration around their products. Apple’s iPhones are an excellent example—Apple has successfully created a market where consumers are drawn to its sleek design, innovative features, and the status symbol that owning an iPhone represents. It’s all about creating a strong emotional bond between consumers and the product/service, where consumers feel driven to possess it, and fulfill their desires. Rational Motivation and Its Influence by PerceptionRational motivation is driven by logic and reasoning. Consumers analyze the direct benefits, the utility they’ll get from a product, like buying a fuel- efficient car for saving future costs. Marketers hence often focus on facts, logical arguments, and direct benefits to trigger rationally driven consumers. Role of Emotional Motivation in Buying DecisionsNever underestimate the power of emotion in consumer decision- making. Feelings evoke strong reactions and influence behavior significantly. Telling compelling stories, creating emotional advertisements, and using engaging visuals can make a product resonate with consumers. Think of those heartfelt insurance commercials – they’re playing straight to emotions, aren’t they? Fear as a Driving ForceFear can be a powerful motivating force. Not quite ethical, but marketers often use fear, like inducing the fear of missing out (FOMO) with limited- time offers, to boost quick sales. Fear of social rejection can also motivate consumers to buy certain clothing, accessories, or electronic gadgets. While it’s a tricky path to tread, if you overcome the ethical concerns, it could indeed lead to a boost in sales. Utilizing Perception in Marketing StrategiesConsumer perception significantly influences buying behavior. To achieve a positive perception, businesses focus on quality, impeccable service, and unique selling propositions. Reinforcing positive experiences and correcting negative ones is an ongoing part of managing consumer perception, and is essential for maintaining a strong customer base. Photo by storyfuel on Unsplash When it comes to understanding consumer behavior, motivation plays a crucial role. Motivation is the driving force behind why consumers behave the way they do, what influences their decision- making process, and how they interact with products and services. In this comprehensive guide, we will delve deep into the topic of motivation in consumer behavior, exploring its definition, theories, and practical implications. Whether you’re a marketer, business owner, or simply curious about human behavior, this article will provide valuable insights into what motivates consumers and how it impacts their choices. What is Motivation in Consumer Behavior? Motivation in consumer behavior refers to the internal psychological processes that drive individuals to take certain actions, make specific purchasing decisions, and engage with brands. It involves the underlying reasons, needs, desires, and goals that propel consumers towards satisfying their wants and achieving a particular outcome. Understanding consumer motivation is essential for businesses as it helps them identify the factors that influence consumer behavior and develop effective marketing strategies to attract and retain customers. Kentrix: Your Competitive Edge – Click to Gain Insights Today! Theories of Motivation in Consumer Behaviour 1. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs One of the most well- known theories of motivation is Abraham Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. According to Maslow, individuals are motivated by a hierarchy of needs, ranging from basic physiological needs to higher- level psychological needs. The hierarchy consists of five levels: Physiological Needs At the base of the hierarchy are physiological needs, such as food, water, shelter, and clothing. Meeting these basic needs is crucial for survival and forms the foundation of motivation. Safety Needs Once physiological needs are fulfilled, individuals seek safety and security. This includes personal safety, financial stability, and protection from harm. Social Needs The next level in the hierarchy is social needs, which involve the desire for love, belongingness, and social interaction. Consumers are motivated to seek acceptance, friendship, and meaningful relationships. Esteem Needs Esteem needs encompass the desire for recognition, status, and self- esteem. Consumers strive for achievements, respect from others, and a positive self- image. Self- Actualization Needs The highest level of Maslow’s hierarchy is self- actualization. It represents the need for personal growth, self- fulfillment, and realizing one’s full potential. Individuals motivated by self- actualization seek personal development and pursue activities aligned with their values and passions. Kentrix: Turn Data into Actionable Insights – Click Here to Transform Your Business 2. Expectancy Theory Another influential theory is the Expectancy Theory, proposed by Victor Vroom. This theory suggests that individuals are motivated to act based on their beliefs about the link between effort, performance, and desired outcomes. The theory emphasizes three key elements: Expectancy Expectancy refers to the belief that exerting effort will lead to successful performance. Consumers are motivated when they perceive that their actions will produce the desired results. Instrumentality Instrumentality involves the belief that successful performance will result in desired outcomes or rewards. Consumers are motivated when they believe that their efforts will lead to positive outcomes, such as discounts, incentives, or recognition. Valence Valence represents the value or attractiveness consumers attach to the expected outcomes. Motivation is high when consumers perceive the rewards as valuable and relevant to their needs and goals. Factors Influencing Consumer Motivation Consumer motivation is influenced by various factors that shape individuals’ perceptions, preferences, and decision- making processes. Let’s explore some of the key factors: 1. Needs and Wants Consumer motivation is driven by the discrepancy between their current state (needs) and desired state (wants). When consumers identify a gap between what they have and what they desire, it creates motivation to take action and bridge that gap. 2. Personal Values and Beliefs Consumers’ personal values and beliefs significantly influence their motivation. Values are deeply ingrained principles and beliefs that guide individuals’ choices and behaviors. Understanding the values and belief systems of target consumers can help businesses align their marketing messages and offerings accordingly. 3. Cultural and Social Factors Cultural and social factors play a vital role in shaping consumer motivation. Cultural norms, societal expectations, and peer influence all impact how individuals perceive and respond to marketing stimuli. Businesses must consider these factors to effectively motivate consumers from different cultural backgrounds. 4. Emotional Appeals Emotions play a significant role in consumer motivation. Marketers often leverage emotional appeals to tap into consumers’ desires, fears, and aspirations. Emotionally engaging advertisements, storytelling, and experiential marketing can evoke strong motivation and drive consumer behavior. 5. Product Involvement The level of consumer involvement with a product or service affects their motivation. Highly involved consumers are more motivated to seek information, evaluate alternatives, and make informed purchase decisions. Marketers can enhance motivation by creating opportunities for consumers to engage with the product and develop a sense of ownership. Kentrix: Your Competitive Edge – Click to Gain Insights Today! FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) Q1: What are the different types of motivation in consumer behavior? There are two primary types of motivation in consumer behavior: Intrinsic Motivation: This type of motivation comes from within the individual. Consumers are driven by internal rewards, such as personal enjoyment, curiosity, or self- expression. Extrinsic Motivation: Extrinsic motivation stems from external rewards or incentives, such as discounts, rewards programs, or social recognition. Q2: How can businesses use consumer motivation to their advantage? Businesses can leverage consumer motivation to influence buying behavior and enhance customer loyalty. By understanding what motivates their target audience, businesses can tailor their marketing messages, product features, and incentives to align with consumer needs and desires. Q3: Can motivation be influenced by advertising? Yes, advertising plays a significant role in influencing consumer motivation. Well- crafted advertisements that tap into consumers’ desires, emotions, and aspirations can effectively motivate them to consider a product, make a purchase, or change their behavior. Q4: Are there any ethical considerations when leveraging consumer motivation? Yes, ethical considerations are crucial when leveraging consumer motivation. Businesses must ensure that their marketing practices align with ethical standards and do not exploit or manipulate consumers’ vulnerabilities. Transparency, honesty, and respect for consumer autonomy should guide marketing efforts. Q5: How can businesses measure consumer motivation? Consumer motivation is challenging to measure directly, as it is an internal psychological state. However, businesses can employ various indirect measures, such as surveys, interviews, observation, and analyzing consumer behaviors and choices. Q6: What are some common pitfalls to avoid when trying to motivate consumers? Some common pitfalls to avoid when trying to motivate consumers include: Overpromising and underdelivering Ignoring individual differences and preferences Failing to communicate value effectively Neglecting to create an emotional connection with consumers Relying solely on extrinsic rewards without considering intrinsic motivation Conclusion Motivation is a fundamental aspect of consumer behavior that drives individuals to make purchasing decisions and engage with brands. By understanding the underlying factors and theories of motivation, businesses can develop strategies that resonate with their target consumers and drive desirable outcomes. Remember, motivation is not a one- size- fits- all concept. It varies across individuals and contexts, making it crucial for businesses to continually assess and adapt their approaches to effectively influence consumer behavior. Read More, How Data Analytics is Revolutionizing Market Entry Strategy for Online Pharmaceutical Retail Abraham Maslow’s hierarchical approach to motivation has been universally “adopted by marketers” (Solomon, White, & Dahl, 2015, p. 100) because it helps them to understand which level of need their target consumer is trying to meet and how to market their product to fulfill that need (Thompson, 2019). Coca- Cola (Coke) is known for its unique and innovative marketing strategies and their approach to Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs is no exception. Throughout history, Coke has expertly targeted every tier of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, and by doing so they have created and retained dedicated life- long customers. The first tier in Maslow’s model is physiological, or basic, needs. The consumers at this level are solely seeking to satisfy their basic survival needs, such as water and staple food items (Walker, 2017). In 1986, Roberto C. Goizueta, the Chairman and CEO of Coke at the time, is quoted saying: “Eventually the number 1 beverage on earth will not be tea, or coffee, or wine, or beer, it will be soft drinks. Our soft drinks.” (Angelico, Neidlik, & Webb, 1998) proving that the company was determined to target the consumers in this motivation tier. Since then, Coca Cola has managed to convince consumers that it should be a staple in their diet, and for many, it has completely replaced water, but this was not always the case (Angelico et al., 1998). In 1886, John Pemberton combined the healing properties of the coca leaf and the cola nut to create a drink that would eventually become Coca Cola; he originally created and marketed it as a “brain- tonic” or “cure- all elixir” (Angelico et al., 1998). Though Maslow would not be born for another 20 or so years (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2019), Pemberton was inadvertently marketing his elixir to the second tier in Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs: safety needs; which includes health, security, and protection. According to Maslow, consumers will not be motivated by safety needs until their physiological needs have been met (Walker, 2017). While Coke is no longer regarded as a “health” drink, it still appeals to consumers motivated by safety needs because it provides them with the comforting feel of home. 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Wherever you go Coca Cola is always there, it’s like coming home to mother.” (Angelico et al., 1998). The second to final tier, self- esteem needs, generally consists of luxury brands (Walker, 2017). In modern- day Eurocentric and Western cultures, we might not consider Coke a luxury item, but its early history is rooted in social status and classism. Mid- 20th century, as a feature of American culture and domestic hospitality, a host would be expected to serve friends and family Coke over Pepsi, the former regarded as a luxury and the latter regarded as a, “second- class drink” (Angelico et al., 1998). This social tier also encompasses motivations surrounding achievement, a theme present throughout Coke’s marketing since the early days when a company hanging a Coke sign out resulted in “immediate business success” (Angelico et al., 1998). 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